



First Universalist Church



West Paris, Maine

Worship Service, Sundays, 9 A.M.

March 2008

Scryings

March 2 The Lion and the Lamb Once upon a time it was said that March came in like a lion and left like a lamb. I'm not sure it was being said about Maine. And less sure now that global warming affecting our weather patterns. We'll consider what becoming a greener sanctuary might mean for us.

March 9 Jesus Wept Anticipating Palm Sunday we'll utilize as a text Luke 19: 41-44, where Jesus weeps at the sight of Jerusalem (and so many other people and places) and the opportunities it has missed. Daylight Saving Time begins!

March 16 Jennifer Wixon, guest minister.

March 20 6:30 p.m. A Maundy Thursday Communion Service will be held in the upper room (the sanctuary) of the Norway church. West Paris members and friends are invited.

March 23 6:30 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service, Perham Road, West Paris. An Easter Breakfast will follow at the West Paris Church. Norway members and friends are invited to participate.

March 23 Rolling the Rock Away A Liberal Christian Easter Service exploring the possibilities of resurrection in our own lives.

March 30 Reasoning Fools Two days before April Fools Day we'll wonder whether as Unitarian Universalists we can be intentionally foolish. If you think we can, please wear very weird, very strange, and most colorful hats to church.

WAYWARD PULPIT

Finland Congo Japan Pakistan Sri Lanka Burundi Germany Uganda
Philippines Ireland Poland Costa Rica Canada Nigeria Russia India
Mexico Kenya England Belgium Spain Rwanda France South Africa

COMMENTARY

The Partner Church Council, holding its winter meeting in Louisville, Kentucky this year, is now almost 15 years old. It was originally called "Save Transylvania" and was organized to do just that. The Romanian Dictator, Nicolai Ceausecu, was putting forth plans to raze the farming villages and move their populations into huge concrete "Agro-industrial Complexes." The plan was especially aimed at the Hungarian minority, intending to separate it from its traditional lands and by scattering it among the much larger Romanian population assimilate it. The result would not only be the loss of the Hungarian language and culture but, incidentally, a hundred and sixty Unitarian churches. The revolution deposed Ceausecu before the plan could be implemented, and the Unitarian churches, some dating from the 12th Italy century, were saved. The name "Save Transylvania" was changed to the Partner Church Council and it began creating partnerships between Poland and Czechoslovakia and churches in North America. Today, the PCC no longer works only in East Central Europe, but all around the world. There are now Universalist, Unitarian Universalist, and Unitarian churches and fellowships in each of the countries listed above. Six separate groups of churches in Kenya alone! These new churches were not organized by North American or European churches. They were created by local people who often had no idea there were other churches in the world that shared their Liberal religious faith. They found out about Unitarian Universalism after they created their churches. All of them have now adapted the flaming chalice as the symbol of their faith. While their practices differ from ours and they administer their churches differently than we do, our theologies and beliefs are hardly different at all. Like ourselves they have an ultimate faith in the inherent worth and dignity of human individuals and a hope in peace justice, freedom and tolerance as the tools to create a better and fairer world for everyone.

For those of us who know our own history here in Maine, we can imagine the tremendous excitement they feel at the message they have discovered and now share with other people about them. As once happened here they can hope that as they share their faith they will see a growth in numbers and influence that will change their own and others lives for the better.

Hearing reports of these extraordinary developments among isolated tribal peoples and educated city dwellers in Asia, Africa, Indonesia and other parts of the pacific nations were inspirational. They gave me renewed hope in what we can do in our small part of the world.

See you in church,

Richard

Board News

The Board of Management met at the church on Feb. 21. The most impressive item we talked about was reviewing the Building and Grounds Report from 2007 along with the page of suggested improvements for the future. It was amazing how much we have accomplished since last June. The list will be made available at church, so look it over and enjoy our progress!

The treasurer, Donna Marshall, was authorized to send \$300 to the Oxford Hills Clergy Association for their discretionary fund. We fully realize what a hard winter this has been on many people and we know the OHCA gets frequent calls for help.

Don't forget the first Northern New England District meeting to be held on April 11 & 12, in Durham New Hampshire. Let Richard know if you would like to attend.

The next board meeting was scheduled for March 13, at 10:00 a.m. at the church. Please contact any board member or come to the meeting if you have anything you would like to see us address.

Joys & Concerns

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the friends and family of **Berniece Swan**. She served her community well throughout her lifetime. She will be sadly missed.

Forward Fellowship

The Goodwill Fellowship met at the home of **Marta Clements** on Feb. 25 with 7 members present. It was decided to end the Cabin Fever afternoons as interest is dwindling.

A good part of the meeting was planning the Easter Breakfast. So we hope to see you at the sunrise service at the home of **Ray and MaryAnn Brown** and then at the breakfast at the church.

A few dates for the One Book / One Community discussions were listed. The book is **HERE IF YOU NEED ME** by the UU minister and chaplain to the Maine Game Warden Service, Kate Braestrup. The discussion at the West Paris Library will be held on Saturday, March 15, at 9:00 and will be led by **Jeannette Baldridge**. The Whitman Memorial Library in Bryant Pond discussion will be led by Marta Clements on Thursday, March 13, at 2:00. The date for the So. Paris Library is Tues., March 11. (not sure of the time) The date for the Norway Library is Thursday, March 20, at 7:00 p.m. The Universalist church in Norway will also be holding a discussion, but date and time have not yet been announced.

Easter Sunday

Ray and MaryAnn Brown have again graciously offered their home for what has now become a tradition....the Sunrise Service. We will meet at 6:30. Dress warmly as March 23, could still be very cold. Then join us at the church for the Easter Breakfast. We chose 6:30 because of the early date for setting our clocks ahead which officially is March 9. However, it is always easier to set the clock before going to bed on the 8th.